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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
09/742,663	12/21/2000	Gary L. Underwood	18004/36930	6972

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EXAMINER

CORBIN, ARTHUR L

ART UNIT

PAPER NUMBER

1761

DATE MAILED: 05/07/2003

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary

Application No. 09(742,663	Applicant(s) CUNDERWOOD ET AL
Examiner ARTHUR L. CORBIN	Group Art Unit 1161

— The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet beneath the correspondence address —

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, such period shall, by default, expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133).
- Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 5-26-01
- ☐ This action is FINAL.
- ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11; 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- ☒ Claim(s) 1-25 is/are pending in the application.
- Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- ☒ Claim(s) 1-25 is/are rejected.
- ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
- ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction or election requirement

Application Papers

- ☐ The proposed drawing correction, filed on _____ is ☐ approved ☐ disapproved.
- ☐ The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are objected to by the Examiner
- ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119 (a)-(d)

- ☐ Acknowledgement is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119 (a)-(d).
- ☐ All ☐ Some* ☐ None of the:
- ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
- ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
- ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this national stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a))

*Certified copies not received: _____

Attachment(s)

- ☒ Information Disclosure Statement(s), PTO-1449, Paper No(s). 3
- ☐ Interview Summary, PTO-413
- ☐ Notice of Reference(s) Cited, PTO-892
- ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application, PTO-152
- ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review, PTO-948
- ☐ Other _____

Office Action Summary

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1. The following is a quotation of the second paragraph of 35 U.S.C. 112:

The specification shall conclude with one or more claims particularly pointing out and distinctly claiming the subject matter which the applicant regards as his invention.

2. Claims 10 and 11 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which applicant regards as the invention.

There is no antecedent basis in claim 6 for "the smoke flavoring agent" (Claims 10 and 11), which can be corrected by changing "the" (line 3) to "a".

3. The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

4. Claims 1-25 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Wilson et al.

Wilson et al discloses slicing frozen pork bellies to a thickness of 0.6 mm, thawing to about 35°F, spraying with or immersing in an aqueous curing solution including each of applicant's claimed components in the amounts claimed (claims 6-11). The amount of curing solution pick-up by the bacon slices is 6-29%. After curing, the bacon slices are cooked.

The temperature after thawing (claims 2, 19 and 20) is merely preferred (spec. page 8, lines 8-13) and is thus not critical. Finding the optimum thawing temperature, the optimum immersing time (claim 5), the optimum amount of sodium nitrite retained by the bacon slices (claims 1 and 12-15), the optimum weight percent yield (claims 20 and

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21), the optimum freezing temperature (claims 22 and 23) and the optimum color value (claims 16-18) would require~~ing~~^{ing} nothing more than routine experimentation by one reasonably skilled in the art.

The data in applicant's Example 5 is based upon mere conclusion without supporting factual evidence of record, e.g., data or photographs. Visual inspection by an unqualified consumer panel that determines that certain products are "unacceptable" ^{spec.} (page 17, lines 33-35) is not persuasive evidence of unexpected results.

5. Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Arthur Corbin whose telephone number is 703-308-3850. The examiner can normally be reached on Tuesday-Friday from 10 am to 7:30 pm. The examiner can also be reached on alternate Mondays.


If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Milton Cano can be reached on 703-308-3959. The fax phone numbers for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned are 703-872-9310 for regular communications and 703-872-9311 for After Final communications.

Any inquiry of a general nature or relating to the status of this application or proceeding should be directed to the receptionist whose telephone number is 703-308-0661.

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A. Corbin/mn
May 5, 2003



ARTHUR L. CORBIN
PRIMARY EXAMINER
5-6-03